



**2022 CDC AMENDMENTS WORKING GROUP MEETING  
Meeting Notes of March 30, 2022**

<u>Members:</u>	Council President Rory Bialostosky, Planning Commissioner Charlie Mathews, Planning Commissioner Scott Erwin, Planning Commissioner Carrie Pellett (Alternate), CCI Member Shannen Knight, EDC Member Shannon Ilas, TAB Member Greg DiLoreto, SAB Member Kim Bria, Member-at-large Darren Gusdorf, Member-at-large Jim Farrell, CCI Member Vicki Olson (Alternate), Councilor Mary Baumgardner (Alternate), and CCI Member Dan Tedrow
<u>Members absent:</u>	Member-at-large JJ Portlock and HRB Member Tom Watton,
<u>Staff present:</u>	Darren Wyss, Planning Manager and Lynn Schroder, Administrative Assistant
<u>Consultant present:</u>	Sou Garner and Alex Dupey, MIG Consultants

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The meeting video is available [here](#).

**1. Welcome and Introductions**

Chair Farrell opened the meeting and took roll.

**2. Role of the Working Group - Purpose/Goal/Meeting Guidelines**

Planning Manager Wyss reviewed the goal and purpose of the Working Group. The West Linn City Council appointed a limited-duration Working Group to review and recommend three Code amendment projects currently underway. The 2022 Working Group will comment on the Code projects by reviewing, discussing, and revising the draft Code amendments.

**3. Meeting 2 - February 23, 2022 Review - Summary Notes and Meeting 2 Discussion Recap**

The Working Group reviewed the February 23, 2022 draft Meeting Notes. No changes were proposed. The Working Group approved the meeting notes.

Planning Manager Wyss recapped the February meeting. At the second meeting, the Working Group reviewed examples of existing middle housing types in West Linn, middle housing concepts, a table of proposed changes to FAR and lot coverage, and discussed which zones could allow more lot coverage. The meeting ended with the primary tasks identified for discussion and consensus at Meeting #3 were:

1. Should there be an increase in FAR for the R-7 and R-10 zones for middle housing types?
2. Can FAR be eliminated in the R-5 and denser zones for middle housing types or should it be increased as recommended?
3. Confirm no maximum lot coverage for the R-5 and denser zones as proposed for middle housing types.
4. Should smaller lots be open for additional density by increasing FAR and eliminating maximum lot coverage (related to #2 and #3 above)?

Based on the February comments, the consultant updated the Draft HB2001 Code Package to ensure it is the "de minimus" package and does not include CDC changes that HB2001 does not require.

#### 4. HB2001 Code Package Discussion #2

The Working Group discussed the table summarizing the comments, responses, and proposed maximum FAR and Lot Coverage requirements for different zone. Alex Dupey noted that the Working Group did not need to reach consensus on these items because all comments would be consolidated and forwarded to the Planning Commission. Shannen Knight disagreed, stating that City Council directed that the Working Group develop a recommendation. Dupey clarified that there could be a recommendation with additional policy questions or considerations.

Sue Garner, MIG Consultants, noted the proposed "de minimus" package was changed to clarify the definitions of multi-family dwelling units. Additionally, changes were made to explain that all residential types would be allowed above permitted the first floor uses. Parking requirements were changed to 1 parking space per unit of middle housing, and the allowance for on-street parking was removed. The proposed language that refers to Willamette Falls Drive and Planned Unit Developments was removed as was the landscaping requirements.

Garner presented options to change FAR. Option 1 would increase the FAR for the higher density zones. Option 2 would increase FAR for middle housing in all zones. Option 3 would remove FAR for all districts.

JJ Portlock noted that eliminating FAR for all zones is because the size, height, setbacks, and lot coverage already limit the structure. FAR further reduces the square footage of a structure even further. Because of FAR, builders would seek to max out lot coverage to get more square footage in middle housing. Larger middle housing units are more desirable, more economically feasible to build, and a better product for West Linn.

Carrie Pellett asked about the Planning Manager discretion for higher FAR in certain zones. Planning Manager Wyss responded that the middle housing code should provide clear and objective requirements. Pellett suggested higher FAR and larger lot coverage for middle housing to encourage densification in certain zones.

Alex Dupey, MIG Consultants, summarized the topic areas for further discussion, including , lot coverage, and FAR options.

Pellett proposed an overlay zone to ensure that middle housing is spread through the City. She sought to limit the concentration of plexes. She thought that having middle housing spread throughout the City intermixed with single-family houses would be more desirable. Wyss responded that the City and the Middle Housing Advisory group considered performance metrics in Phase 1 of the HB2001 implementation, however, the complexity of figuring out performance metrics proved to be onerous. He stated the desired result could be achieved by setting FARs for each zone.

Ilas was concerned with bringing high density into an area that does not have it.

Knight stated that an overlay zone should be considered in the future when it could be vetted more thoroughly.

Mathews disagreed with the concept of spreading middle housing through existing neighborhoods. He was concerned about the impacts to existing neighborhoods. He stated that people expect to be able to live in the community that they bought into. He would rather have the middle housing concentrated in a particular area.

Erwin stated that the proposed changes to the CDC should not be drastic but he supported an approach that would be equal and fair across the board. He noted that the marketplace would determine the pattern middle housing development in West Linn. He emphasized that middle housing square footage should be large enough to allow a family to live comfortably with a neighborhood feel. He clarified that the West Linn rules could allow tiny units, but that the market would not build them because local market pressures. He encouraged members to evaluate the choices based on the West Linn of the future and not the West Linn of the past.

JJ Portlock asked for a discussion on the benefits of FAR.

Mathews opposed removing FAR. He disagreed with Erwin to allow FAR changes in R-7 and R-10 zones.

Farrell was concerned about concentrating on middle housing. He agreed with Pellett that it should be spread through the City. He agreed with Portlock's point about envisioning an existing West Linn house with two doors for a duplex. He supported providing diverse housing to be accepting of all people. He stated that the community would become more diverse as people moved to Oregon.

Erwin responded to Portlock about the benefits of FAR. He said that FAR could encourage the development of plexes. Portlock rebutted that FAR is the limiting factor in the development and promotes maximum lot coverage. Darren Gusdorf agreed with JJ Portlock. He noted that West Linn is one of the very few jurisdictions with a FAR requirement. He said FAR can work to a degree in R-10, but does not work on smaller zones. He said once you get in smaller zones and smaller lots, the FAR requirement is so restrictive that building does not make sense. He said it is not feasible to build 500 to 800 square foot homes. Portlock noted that FAR requirements in smaller zones create a tradeoff between garages and living space.

Pellett was concerned that removing FAR would create a large house mass that was disproportional to the surrounding homes. She did not want to remove FAR on single-family homes.

DiLoreto agreed with Portlock and Gusdorf that the FAR should be removed. He was concerned about parking for plexes. He stated that the units need to be large enough to be marketable.

Mathews stated that the existing FAR and maximum lot coverage were important to privacy, noise reduction, tree canopy, traffic reduction, street parking, and emergency response. He said that modifying these requirements would be detrimental to current residents. He said keeping existing FAR and lot coverage would minimize middle housing development and allow the City Council time to provide oversight and direction on this kind of development. He opposed any changes to the CDC that were more permissive than the di minimus packet.

Watton stated that he designs houses for a living. He also lives in the Bolton area. He thinks that most middle housing will concentrate in Bolton. He supported removing the FAR requirement.

Olson agreed with Mathews.

Baumgardner agreed with Pellett.

Bialostosky agreed that FAR may not be necessary if the code regulates height, setback, and lot coverage. He wanted to learn more about FAR in the public process.

Erwin stated that keeping FARs, for now, would ease the transition to middle housing in West Linn. He said

FARs could be used to encourage middle housing in larger zones. He agrees that middle housing would not occur in smaller zones with FAR requirements.

Knight stated that she would support removing FAR from R2.1 and 4.5. In R-5, R-7, and R-10, she wanted FAR to remain as it is in the current code.

Ilas stated that she is a realtor with clients who are first-time homebuyers who are priced out of the West Linn market. She said there is a huge need for middle housing in West Linn. Her clients prefer middle housing that folds into the look and feel of the existing neighborhood. She would like the rules to address neighborhood compatibility. She said that first-time homeowners would prefer a little bit of land, but given a choice, some would choose more living space, and some would choose some yard.

Gusdorf noted that removing FAR would not result in a catastrophic change in West Linn housing.

Tedrow noted that he was a first-time buyer when he bought his house in West Linn right before COVID. He sees a significant shortage of smaller housing types for young families and downsizers. He sees people getting stuck in the rental trap, paying market rates for their lifetime. He thinks middle housing can be done tastefully.

Portlock stated that the negative impact of not removing FAR would be fewer garages and less parking.

Pellett supported allowing detached plexes. She stated that incentives are needed to densify larger lots.

Bria lives in a small house on a large property. She supports middle housing. She said a townhome development with inadequate parking was built near her home and created significant parking problems. She stated that there are many unimproved streets in West Linn that would become a muddy mess when people park on it. She agreed with Portlock and Gusdorf that a good product with parking is essential, but the surrounding homes' impacts need to be considered.

Farrell agreed that downsizers and first-time homebuyers are vying for the same middle housing options. He did not want West Linn to end up like southeast Portland where you have affordable housing, but the area is run down. He did not want middle housing concentrated on Highway 43.

Dupez, MIG Consultant, asked if members supported relaxing FAR and site coverage standards for larger lots to allow plexes. He noted that if the group wanted to see more housing types, then that would need to be put in place to get there.

Bialostosky noted that the Council's direction for the working group was that if a consensus could not be reached on any issue, the group would prepare an alternative recommendation and its rationale.

The working group agreed to prepare three alternatives to submit to the Planning Commission for the legislative process. The consultant will draft three options, di-minimus choice, and two more middle housing forward packets for consideration by the working group at the next meeting. DiLoreto disagreed that the working group forward three alternatives to the Planning Commission. He suggested that the consultant prepare three options for the working group to consider at the next meeting. If the working group cannot reach a consensus, then it should vote on the alternative to present to the Planning Commission and a minority report.

JJ Portlock noted that more discussion on sloping lots needs to occur.

**5. Meeting 4 Agenda/Tasks**

The next meeting is April 27, 2022. He asked for working groups comments by April 8, 2022 to the consultant can incorporate it into the materials for the April meeting.

**6. Public Comment**

Karie Oakes submitted a comment letter.

**7. Adjourn**

Chair Farrell adjourned the meeting at 5:00 pm.